

expanded vastly in number, scope and coverage. Such initiatives can promote further liberalisation and may assist least-developed, developing and transition economies in integrating into the international trading system. In this context, we note the importance of existing regional arrangements involving developing and least-developed countries. The expansion and extent of regional trade agreements make it important to analyse whether the system of WTO rights and obligations as it relates to regional trade agreements needs to be further clarified. We reaffirm the primacy of the multilateral trading system, which includes a framework for the development of regional trade agreements, and we renew our commitment to ensure that regional trade agreements are complementary to it and consistent with its rules. In this regard, we welcome the establishment and endorse the work of the new Committee on Regional Trade Agreements."

When we notice the overall composition of the Declaration and the stand consistently taken by our country, we cannot lose sight of the fact that our country has taken a stand which is in conformity with the consistent stand that we have been taking in these matters. At this juncture we have to see other things. It is not as if we are prepared to face a situation when all the terms of the agreement are becoming operative. Now we feel that in the context of our economy, especially the industrial growth there is a need for us to foster the existing core sectors from the onslaught of the new arrangement. So, we have to prepare ourselves.

Our senior Member was mentioning about the situation of the public sector undertakings like I.T.I. We may also mention about similar organisations. We have also to protect certain core sector organisations so that in the event of a competition in future our infrastructure facilities or our key industries do not lose their identity so as to be a dis-service to the country in that field.

These are certain aspects. I was listening to the hon. Member who was mentioning about the present economic situation. It is true that the present Government has been following the liberalisation policy that was adopted in 1991 and followed subsequently. At the same time, it is also true that there have been some instances. In specific cases I have observed that though there have been technological improvements in the quality of the products, at the same time there has been a negative growth in respect of employment in certain areas.

We have the National Renewal Fund. The budgetary provision is being made year after year. These things, the situation relating to the employment, condition of labour in view of the new scenario after liberalisation will also have to be taken care of. Units like I.T.I., H.M.T.

etc. have also a social cause to be followed. They are following the cause. That also has to be borne in mind while allowing for unbridled privatisation by investment from overseas or internally.

These are certain things which I would like to bring to the notice of the Government through you, Madam Chairperson. I thank you for this opportunity given to me. I welcome the stand taken by the Government.

I would also impress upon the Government to see that the industry and trade of the country is not affected adversely and that we have to take preliminary steps that are required so as to be in a position to face the situation that arises after the transition period.

18.20 hrs.

## BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### Ninth Report

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS  
AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA)  
: I beg to present the Ninth Report of the Business Advisory Committee.

18.21 hrs.

## DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

### (ii) India's stand on Singapore declaration of World Trade Organisation - Contd.

[Translation]

SHRI SHATRUGHAN PRASAD SINGH (Balia) (Bihar) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, today we are discussing a very important and sensitive issue. At this juncture, I would like to remind you of the international 5th Conference of the Labour Ministers held in Delhi on 23rd January, 1995 in which directives were issued about the Labour standards. The consensus arrived at the Conference has been given at page 34 of the Joint Declaration.

[English]

It is mentioned under 'Upgrading of Labour Standards'

"Opposition to any attempt to link ILO Conventions with international trade at all international fora. and -

[Translation]

Review, updating and consolidation of international labour standards within the ILO without linkage to trade concerns."